MASMID

JUNE·1930

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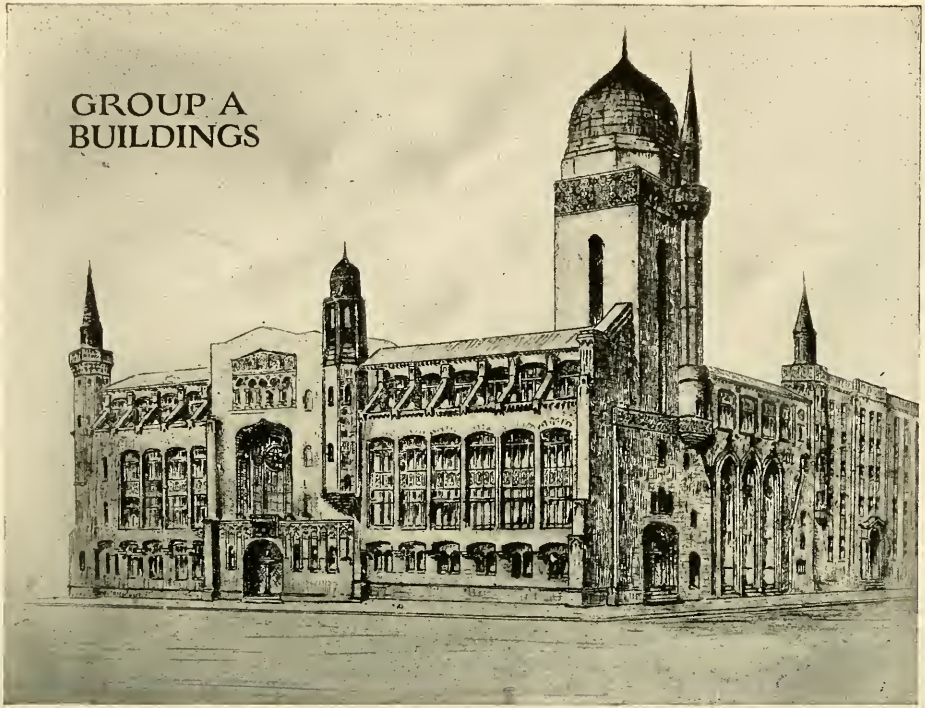

Yeshiva College

YESHIVA COLLEGE "MASMID"

NUMBER II JUNE, 1930

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EDITORIAL

DOLDRUMS

Upon looking through other college publications whose predominant tone is good cheer and jolly wit a definite uneasiness stirs through us. If a college publication represents the frame of mind of the student body, our temperament has surely not been a denizen of the more sporty spheres. We have had a serious dearth of articles of the jollier sort. Our articles seem to be the weighty articulation of sighing Hamlets—heavy-hearted with soliloquies and ponderous meditation.

Yet we feel the source of expressiveness in us is the same as in our more jovial compeers. We know we can learn to respond just as warmly to good-cheer and jolly wit—for we feel a ripening congeniality in us. Yet our laughter has been like the arrested smile of the Mona Lisa—like the slow thawing of ice-peaks. We know of a place where there was no laughter—but it was the habitat of Gulliver's senile Surbrugs. College, however, is the habitat of youth—and youth without jollity is a lesser form of spiritual impotence or torpor.

Must this emotional jading come with intellectual consecration? Then is not all knowledge an insipid thing if it brings with it an incapacity for joy in life? Perhaps we need not go so far in denunciation. We feel this half-baked lethargy cannot truly be traced to devotion to books but rather to a misdirected zeal and to an uncalled for cloistered isolation.

We have denied ourselves wholesome social lives that could include the virtues of intellectuality without the vice of excessive virtue. It is to this denial of a wealth of extra-curricular experiences that our social torpor can be traced. Where is a spokesman to represent us in oratory, in debates, in dramatics? Our athlete is a sulking Achilles —and we've a crying need for him.

We have been standing upon a fertile soil; and a wholesome social tree should have long ago, from deep-thrust root, have lifted leaves of pleasant association. All we've achieved is a weed here and there. Class room atmosphere fades in time; but a walk, confidential exchanges, fraternity, a rousing school song and extra-mural competition—these engender sentiments that linger after integrals and Vergil are forgotten. They are the oft-mentioned "ties that bind," infusing vigorous life into colorless creatures of clay.

WANDERER

O wandering Jew! Soul without peace or rest!
Thou hast traversed the seas, the breakers' foam;
Hast wandered far from thy beloved home—
That holy land with milk and honey blest.
Thou travellest ever o'er East and West,
And art compelled, from land to land, to roam;
For branded as the student of one tome,
Thou art forever the unwelcome guest.
But Jew! Though wanderer, despised, disdained,
Thou hast refused to perish or to yield;
Thy faith in thy Creator has not waned.
Hast been devoted to His Word—thy shield.
And, Jew, such hope and trust must be repaid;
The Merciful will bless thee with His aid.

Joseph Kaminetsky

Jacob out of Books

By HERBERT GREENBERG

T was shearing time in Padan-aram. The warm air echoed with the swish of the heavy shears and with the trembling "ma-a-a" of the bewildered sheep. Sometimes a helpless ewe started to stray away, but that only meant that Jacob or another shepherd boredly shooed the wanderer back into place. The ewe never rebelled; she just plodded dully back in meek return to the flock.

The sheep were so utterly guileless in their feeble bleating over repressed wants or sudden stabs from the shears that Jacob's heart expanded with tenderness for them. Confronted with wily Laban, Jacob, too, had been feebly bleating, he brooded. Away from Laban Jacob would become violently exasperated. How blandly the pompous sheik had again and again pretended concern over Jacob's poverty; and Jacob had been shooed into place again. There was no rebellion—only a dull plodding. And paupered Jacob had served while Laban's grazing flocks had fattened and multiplied.

.....

Memories were like bits of wool at shearing-time, Jacob thought. You nimbly ran through them; sometimes with an amused smile on your lips. And sometimes you came across some wool your shears had spoiled-clean, soft wool, but your shears had cut into it badly. It clung to your fingers and to shake it off seemed villainous. It had been so clean and pure—and a bit of a thoughtlessness of blind impatience had spoiled it.

There were memories that clung to Jacob in just that way. There was the sad memory of a half-blind old man in Canaan, sitting silently at the opening of his tent. His face was relaxed, and the peace of patient old age was upon it. His beard was flowing white and his blank stare was steady and piercing. Then,too, one always felt that there were hidden eyes behind the unseeing ones—sober, hidden eyes that saw into the spirit of things! When wronged they seemed to become hurt and sad, and the hurt and sadness were more troubling than the most venemous rebuke. Those eyes still lived and judged in far-off Padan-aram—in the heart of Jacob.

The old man was quietly grieving with the peace that comes with resignation and humility. And with his grieving came wisdom and understanding. But it was a sorrowful wisdom. It was a humble insight, that came with sadness for a son who had left the strength of the earth of Canaan for the refuge of Padan-aram. Yes, there was strength in Canaan. The fertility of the earth showed strength, and the languor of the warm air was as strong as heady wine.

Age and death came to Canaan like a sunset, thought the old man. He thought how the light of one's life dimmed slowly, the warmth cooled, the twilight glimmered, lingered for a beatific moment, and then slowly lost itself in the vastness of the dark—and the old man would be content. There was no fear of death in Canaan. There was reverence for it, and humble submission and trusting impotence too,—at life's dusk. But who could tell of the fright of death in Padan-aram, and the panic of living there—and the haunting death in life. But in Canaan there was the contentment of a warm sun by day, and the silvery beams of a hurrying moon by night. And the cool, starry nights when one wandered afield dreaming . . . when the scent of the flowers strengthened, and cold laden breezes freshened and clusters of stars twinkled coldly; there were endless walks then for lovers. And the old would feel a bit cold and would wrap themselves more tightly and nod asleep over vague recurring memories; while through the hush of night the fertile land lay bared in peace.

Then there would often come to Jacob the memory of a gruff brother from whose rage Jacob had fled. Jacob had mingled emotions for red and hairy Esau. There was an instinctive revulsion against Esau's grossness, and there was fondness—as one is fond of a husky, unruly child.

On the fields, one day, Esau had tasted a bitter, unripe berry. He made fierce grimaces and then out of one eye a tear pitifully fell. Jacob, standing by, laughed at this naive brother of his, and a deep feeling of compassion for Esau welled up in him. He put his white arm around Esau's broad shoulders, while Esau sulked in waning distemper and petulance. Esau was rather fond of Jacob now that weak brother whom he could throw with one heave! How he mocked Jacob's frailty, meanwhile purring with the pride of his own strength, grateful to Jacob for the stimulus of the purring pride. He let Jacob twist his arm playfully while he distorted his face in mock pain. They were never closer brothers than then. Esau soon forgot; and in time Jacob too felt uncomfortable when he recalled his intimacy with his sweating brother.

There was the repulsive vision of barbaric Judith, Esau's wife. Jacob tried not to think of her, but she loomed up in his mind like a phantom— her body reeking of sweat and filth. Refined Jacob, who dreamed of a tender woman wholly detached from worldly cares, would become chilled at the thought of his brother gay beside the thick-set Judith. Jacob's wife was to be slender and pliant as the willow. She was to hum sweet tunes for Jacob when the day's tasks were done as he laid his warm head on her lap, while cool breezes wafted the fragrance of her to him— and he was lulled into a dreamy sleep.

Then a chaos of memories! A quivering son kneeling before a half-blind father, and a blessing "be a *man* among your brethren." Then the berserk rage of Esau like the rage of a wounded lion, and the flight of "the man among his brethren"; the coming to Padan-aram, and the welcome of a strange people. Events happened so rapidly they jumbled their impressions until there was time for a future unraveling. And, often, in lambing time, on the frosty nights when Jacob would warm the shivering lambs, there would come a pining for home.

... .

Years and years of thinking passed until clearness came. But a hurt still ached. It was not clearness Jacob wanted—it was the fullness of home life. Jacob had suffered, and there were none at home to bear anger against him anymore. The sorrowing father had only anxiety, and surely Esau had had time to forget. But Jacob still foundered in the waves of melancholy.

In those years there had been Leah and Rachel and domestic cares that, at times, almost absorbed the entire Jacob. Jacob felt dual-lived now. Was it really he who had herded so many flocks until they exceeded Laban's? Surely it was not the moody, inner Jacob who had somehow acquired those herds. It was a skin-deep, efficient Jacob who had contrived to possess those grazing flocks, and not a yearning, ever-mournful Jacob.

It was shearing-time in Padan-Aram, and Laban was away shearing sheep in a distant mountain enclosure. From his tent Jacob could see the mountain-peak swathed in draping clouds, and he dreamed of the mountains in Canaan covered with their mighty trees. He had a vision of some tents rising boldly among the tree monsters. There were streams pouring out of the side of the mountain. They were rapid streams, and they seemed happy and free. And Jacob would grow pensive thinking of the freedom of the streams while he loitered in servitude.

It was shearing-time, and Laban was away; but Jacob's mind was not on the shearing. The air of Padan-aram seemed to be stifling him, and the bleating of the sheep held no more fondness for him. Just now it was shearing time in Canaan too, and aged Isaac would be needing willing hands. At dusk there would be the clash of cymbals and the purring twang of stringed instru-

ments, Jacob knew. There would be rest and cool breezes for the weary, and silhouettes of distant hills for the dreamer. There would be no greedy counting of the sacks of wool, nor the tense gossiping of Laban's sons. Jacob would no longer feel their watchful eyes upon him. In Canaan were soothing kindness and oriented thoughts; but in Padan-aram were bewildering strangeness and the slitted eyes of an envious kin . . .

Jacob laid his shears aside in despair. He could not put his mind on the shearing while there was shearing in Canaan. Then the resolute, efficient Jacob shrugged off the dreamer Jacob. Laban was away. Canaan was calling; and there was an open road . . .

.....

Jacob's heart was singing next morning; for he was on his way home, and with him was his household. He had left home in a flight of fear, and was returning now in a flight of exultation. Jacob had a new confidence in his future dealings with Esau, and he had a contempt for his father-in-law, Laban, who would not know of the flight until shearing was over.

There was one among the caravan whose eyes did not strain only for the purple hills of Gilead ahead. Rachel's anxieties were more of the pursuit of Laban; for this daughter of Laban knew her father would pursue. Hidden under her saddle-cushion were her father's images. They somehow reminded her of her dejected years of barrenness and of the cheerless days and the cold nights. They were the symbol of her departure from a maid to a woman. They were the spirit of the pagan daemons of Padan-aram and her depriving Laban of them was an expression of her acceptance of a new creed—a creed of dreamers.

Jacob stumbled across her there. Jacob's heart felt heavy for Rachel, and he remembered how cold he had been to her because of the enmity of her brothers. Now, however, she was no longer to be distrusted as a woman of the dangerous Laban tribe. She was a tender child who had been abused by rough brothers and a treacherous father, and deep compassion for her stirred in Jacob. She had suffered for all the contempt Jacob felt for her brothers. She had suffered alone; and the burden had been lonesome nights with no mate to share her grief. There were the endless nights of futile waiting, the ghastly dreams, the wells of salty tears and a heart that seemed to melt with sorrow . . .

Laban was camped that night an hour's journey from Jacob. With him were his brethren, as alert as hounds achase. In them was a hidden awe and a twinge of envy for the wealthy heir, Jacob. Jacob was ascending Mount Gilead when Laban overtook him. . . .

.....

Laban was gone and with him his ceremonious affection and his avowals of sentiment—when there existed only distaste. Laban had been wary of his speech, and Jacob had hidden contempt with difficulty. Jacob was glad the meeting was over, and Laban was returning to Padan-aram. Canaan and aged Isaac beckoned to him, and Rachel, with her deep love sparkling in her eyes, was by his side. Joy was bursting within him, and he could not hide the song in his heart and his smile on his lips. Gone was intrigue and guarded speech forevermore. He dreamed of the splendor of Canaan; the rustle of leaves and the rushing of streams. The lure of distant hills would make him keen and newborn with unfenced freedom. He seemed to hear angelic music calling him into Canaan, and the rush of wings of a host of angels shutting Padan-aram away from behind. He was hushed by the splendor of a new old life and a new land before him—where an old, old man was waiting for a tarrying son.

....

Through shining days the caravan plodded along and when purple dusk came, when the desert seemed like a silent, billowing sea, they set up camp. At night the fires twinkled across the desert, through the weight and darkness of the night, as if in mute communion with the stars. . . .

When all were hushed in sleep Jacob and Rachel were still awake. The cold breath of the desert night held them in huddled silent

bliss, for the stirrings of their poignant souls were far removed from earthly things and purposes. It was a world of contentment complete within itself. It was a gossamer world of dream-stuff where naught existed but the abstract tenderness of the present and the honeyed promises of the future. Not a word did the lovers say; but their silence was of mystic clairvoyance, while their spirits glided from their eyes and lips.

Then when Rachel slumbered Jacob wandered off into the desert alone with a feeling of sadness and with a presentiment of evil. His happiness made him feel aged as if he had lived through an eternity. All other things were petty now for a new spirit had merged with the two lovers from their own warmth and felicity.

A prayer burst out of Jacob for strength and guidance to keep this ardent soul thrust upon his care forever youthful and happy. For Rachel was with child. . . .

There came thoughts of a graying domesticated Rachel, weaning children and mother of a household, her fervor hidden like sidereal fires. It was depressing to think of her ageing slowly, and the fire within her cooling. She was an arrested flame and there could be no embers of passion. Would there be only an aching emptiness where the flames had once licked, or would there be two graying heads nodding asleep together?

... .

On the road to Hebron Rachel died. Jacob stood by the dry sand that covered her body with wrinkled, new-born Benjamin in his arms. Ben-oni—child of my pain—Rachel had called him with her last breath. A deep void within him bowed Jacob; too deep for tears to reach or fill. A salty mist veiled his eyes, and slowly he felt a youthful spirit within him wither and fade away. And he knew that when Rachel had gone two souls were lost in an eternity of quiet.

Ben-oni was crying in Jacob's arms, and an old, old man was waiting for a tarrying son. And it was shearing time in Canaan.

DEFEAT?

Stir me not
To troubled aspirations
That torture me
On the rack of discontent.
Let me dream
Untroubled
Of things that must not be,
With the perfect happiness
Of dreams,
With the nebulous perfection
Of dreams.
Let me grasp
The unattainable,
Enter Paradise,
And, awaking, forget.
Oh, Domesticity,
Powerful mother,
Let me sleep in your arms.

Charles Hirshfeld

Pot-Pourri

By EEGEE

Meanderings of a miscreant mentality.

1. Idiosyncrasy is the privilege of the genius and of the successful but when possessed by the average citizen makes him the subject for an alienist.

2. "Reading maketh a full man" sayeth Bacon. Even a prohibitionist may indulge in that form of dissipation.

3. Idealism is the saving grace of humankind. It is the line of demarcation between the material and the mind. Without it life would be entirely a struggle for existence, an insenate desire for self-preservation — and devil take the hindmost.

Idealism is the only excuse man has for continuing to live.

4. A cynic is usually a person who, disappointed in a petty personal affair, uses it as a criterion by which to judge the rest of the world.

5. Sarcasm is often a substitute for reason.

6. The dogmatist tells us that "Vice is Vice and Virtue is Virtue—and never the twain shall meet," nevertheless there are several things that may be both:

Pride is just as much a vice as it is a virtue.

Conceit is a vice, self-confidence a virtue—yet both have the same origin, Vanity.

7. Stretching the truth is "hyperbole" for the poet, but plain perjury for the layman.

8. Of those who keep within the law, fifty percent do so because they fear retaliation; fifty percent because they haven't had an opportunity to violate a law—the remainder because they really have a moral sense of right.

9. I fear that the problems arising from a discussion of eugenics have addled my poor brain sadly. If a man is but a composition of good or bad characteristics inherited from his ancestors why should he be commended for talent or punished for wrongdoing—being personally irresponsible for the traits that cause his actions?

However, were Society not to reward ability or punish crime, those born with talent would have no incentive for exercising that ability, and those born with criminalistic tendencies, and who are kept from crime by the fear of punishment under the present seemingly unjust system, would make the rest of the social organization suffer for their own unfortunate condition.

The existing system of "justice" may be fundamentally unjust, but it is necessary.

10. The pessimist is the fellow who constantly tells the world that it is stuck in a rut, instead of helping to extricate it.

11. "It takes two to make a quarrel," says the pacifist derogatorily, forgetting that the holy state of matrimony itself has this principle for its "raison d'etre."

12. Nothing is right unless its consequences are more beneficial than harmful; and nothing is wrong unless its consequences are more harmful than beneficial.

There are no exceptions to this rule.

13. Isn't it peculiar that those who least expect to go to Hell are most interested in it?

14. "Variety is the spice of life"—but our modern brand is too seasoned for healthy consumption.

15. Age that would be youth can never be more than a synthetic imitation, nor can it be more than a pathetic paradox, out of its sphere, alien both to its kind and to that which it seems to emulate.

Life's inevitable flow and ebb cannot be arrested, and he who would stay the ebb-tide finds loneliness and isolation at a time when he needs most compassion and sympathy.

16. There is no complacence like that of the radical in ridiculing the smugness of the conservative.

There is nothing so conventional as his so-called "freedom from conventionalism."

17. "Beauty" covers a multitude of sins.

18. Lying isn't wrong—it's foolish. It is not the original cost of lying that is the greatest burden, but its upkeep.

19. Cat-like, Life plays with us, amused at our puny attempts to escape the bounds of its paws. Then, its enjoyment waning, it idly destroys us.

20. Having obtained dominion over this world by a series of fortuituous events Man, in his colossal conceit, declares because he is master of the Earth the entire Universe was made for his benefit by a God whose main concern is Man's welfare.

How bombastic is his fantastic faith to believe that he, an infinitesimal speck on an infinitesimal needle lost in an infinite haystack, is the reason for the existence of both the needle and the haystack!

21. There is nothing so good but that there is a limit to its value and efficacy. Religion, overdone, becomes bigotry—logic, sophistry—civilization, decadence—patriotism, junkerism—contentment, stagnancy. So it is with charity, with ambition, with love, with culture, with prosperity, with truth and with everything else we consider desirable.

22. In many cases sympathy is a combination of fear that you may become involved in like circumstances, and relief that you have not.

23. In choosing words to express our thoughts adequacy is more important than simplicity, but when simplicity is adequate complex language is affectation.

24. Courage is either the repression or the lack of imagination.

25. Many of us admire our friends because we endorse their admiration of us. Much of our antagonism for others is prompted by their dislike for us.

26. There are many people who spend their lifetimes trying to find out the purpose of existence and then realize that their cogitations occupied the time within which they ought to have lived.

They were unable to comprehend that actual living is the purpose of life.

27. Being in hot-water makes us hard-boiled.

"AMANS AMARE"

My humble heart was gashed with ragged rents
Ere you came.
Another had already hacked with strands of hair
And veiled eyes and skin of velvet
Ere you came.
All I could offer was a bruised pulp
And in your charity you took me in—
And the healing wounds again began to bleed.
Now you're gone—
Yet I feel the mightiness of my heart
Exulting in its shattered bits.

Trebreh

Recall

By MEYER ESKOWITZ

1919 came and Allied statemen had gathered to piece together the fragments of justice left over by the War. Meanwhile, in a morgue of the Charney Hospital, some surgeons were piecing together the fragments of humankind left over by the same relentless Mars . . .

Silence, gloomy silence, filled the tiny morgue; and in oppressive ghostliness the spirit of a cadaver seemed to hover over some surgeons who were bowed over a still form. The lifeless eyes seemed to penetrate eternities—seemed to have felt the depths of pain —seemed to be living in death . . . The features were stony cold, the heart evidently lifeless—but it was the haunting ghastliness and living pain of the eyes that kept the surgeons bowed over the body. Peace had been declared—yet one more gash of the surgeon's knife as a farewell to the maimed and the dead . . . One more stroke of piety for the eyes that refused to die.

An incision was made in the cold body's breast—a hypodermic needle was thrust into the bloodless heart and a powerful stimulant was injected. Then the surgeons stepped back. They were hardened old codgers but they were held in breathless anxiety. They were calling life from the hollow chambers of the dead and were waiting for a ghastly return or a decisive defeat. Defeat would be more quieting—and they hoped for a defeat. The body lay still . . . The surgeons looked at each other and smiled. They had been scared by just another ghost . . . by a dead, cold man whose eyes refused to close.

But their smiles froze on their lips . . . . Slightly, slightly—ever so tenderly—a breath of freshness seemed to fill the room . . . And on a cold slab an ashen face was taking on color—and life. The eyelids stirred, slowly the pale lips began to move. A hollow voice came from the dead; seemed to come from cold, distant climes.

"I see . . . I see . . . marching men . . . Bayonets . . . sunlight . . . Marching men going up front . . . They are smiling in the sunlight . . . They have never been up front —never seen the red of flames, the noise—never . . .

"I see other marching men . . . they are not smiling . . . Why some have no heads. Chests ripped open, entrails trailing . . . bandaged—gored. They have fallen marching —in gory glory—but they have forgotten rest, have forgotten heaven after knowing hell . . . They remember marching, this unsmiling battalion . . . Oh, oh . . . I see myself . . . myself . . . among the blood and the black . . .

The voice stopped. The eyes closed. The lips were pressed together. The heart had stopped—forever. Recall was over.

APROPOS THE CONFUSION OF SHORT HISTORIES:

To begin with, there was much political chicanery and duplicity, and the facts could not be measured with a yardstick. America wanted to paddle her own canoe in the waters which flowed under the bridges and with which she washed her clothes in the open.

As for MacDonald, he is a socialist, more than that, an Englishman; even better, a Scotchman; and the Englishman is proud of being illogical, though he has shown a brotherly love for China.

The upshot was that the Germans had to tighten their belts, because you can't get blood out of a stone. However, if you find the nigger in the wood-pile and scratch him under the skin it might prove a boomerang in any election.

We can easily find flaws in the Paris Peace Pact with a fine-toothed comb, since the first few words of a treaty are only window dressings. In fact there was a string attached to it—or rather, a rope.

While France was afraid that Italy would stick her under the fifth rib, England said, "A plague on both of you." That brings us to Mussolini, the Bull in the China-shop. He is known as the bad boy of Europe, the man with the chip on his shoulder, which is dangerous with so much loose powder lying around in Europe. The worst time to tread on his corns is when the shoe pinches.

All of which raises the big question—what will happen when he shuffles off this mortal coil?

'Round Town

PARK AVENUE

Lower Park Avenue:

Tall, huge apartment houses line both sides of the broad avenue. In the center is a fenced-in strip of grass and young trees. This, a city front yard, is the nearest to Nature even the rich may come. No heavy trucks rumble by here, no children play in the streets. The way is open for shiny purring limousines. Occasionally a car glides to a halt in front of an awninged arch and a doorman, costumed like an admiral, rushes forward; obsequiously he bows and opens the door of the car. A matronly-bosomed dowager with a frozen, bored, woman-of-the-world look on her face, painted youthful, steps out—a spotless puppy in her arms. She marches stiffly into the house. The poker-faced, uniformed chauffeur nonchalantly unfolds a newspaper and spreads it on the steering wheel. A white-clad, smiling nurse-maid passes, wheeling a perambulator and leading a pedigreed dog. The chauffeur continues reading the paper. The maid peeved, passes on; the chauffeur had not raised his eyes.

Upper Park Avenue:

As the elevated cars roar by the windows of the crowded tenement houses rattle. The ground floor of each house is usually occupied by a store. Each store has its variegated goods—from shoelaces to pickles and tin-pots—all on display on the front sidewalk. All races and colors jostle one another on the narrow, broken sidewalk as they dodge in and out among these store displays and the dickering shoppers. The windows of each store are covered with large, crude white-washed signs advertising the bargains to be had inside. To pause and examine one of these spurious bargains is to instigate a hortatory sales-talk on the part of the ever-watchful owner or one of his family.

Under the elevated is a triple row of push-carts. Paper-bags and old newspapers are jammed between the spokes of the cart-wheels. Large, scrawled figures written on paper bags placed on erect sticks announce the price of each article; some venders sell three grades of one ware. Only the regular customers are permitted to pick what they like from the carts. The peddlers are of all ages; middle-aged, decrepit old-age or young children in their teens, who continually shout their wares. Some women-shoppers shuffle along the crowded way alone, straining under heavily loaded shopping bags. Others are accompanied by a passive husband or a rebellious child who carries the more weighty purchases. Still others, afraid to leave the baby home alone, push baby-carriages along haltingly, amid the often-voiced irritation of the by-goers. Into the carriage with the baby or babies go the packages.

A street-cleaning truck comes along and the accumulated rubbish at each stand is shoveled up and carried away. Constant bedlam clamors.

The only reminder of the aristocratic Park Avenue some blocks further down-town is an occasional limousine, the price of which would keep most families happily fed for a year, which stops in a side street. From this the poker-faced, uniformed chauffeur nonchalantly walks to the market to do the family shopping, while the family and poodle wait boredly in the shiny limousine.

R. M. W.

THE FREE THEATRE

Far off the beaten track, away from the electric glamor of Broadway, and swallowed up in the warm European odors of East 27th Street, is the Free Theatre. As one leaves the crowded subway-combed section behind one becomes conscious of a mysterious lengthening of shadows gradually terminating in the big darkness of the East River. One is impressed by a feeling of approaching a transplanted Europe. The signs on the store-windows change into crazy Russian symbols, the stores into steamy, evil-looking cafes. One hesitates to continue; then a feebly lighted sign in good-old-English, and one breathes a deep sigh of relief and of quickened expectation.

In the dim gloom stands an old two-story building remodeled after the fashion of mythological theatre-fronts of yore. It is set in from a row of houses, thus forming a little fenced-in courtyard where an eager crowd awaits the opening of the theatre doors. The glass-panel doors are diversely decorated with amateurishly printed signs: "Next week—'The School for Scandal.' Today—'The Affected Young Ladies,'" which names are a fine example of the spirit and purpose of the Free Theatre.

The crowd is a motley one of lively youth and drama-thirsty age, most of them with more time than money. All are exuberant, light-spirited, exuding warm and buoyant companionship. One is caught in the swing of mutual good-feeling as one is jostled merrily about. These people are kind, well-wishing brothers in the search for amusement where money and rank are of no account.

And so one's thought wander in a world filled with sentiment and healthy optimism when the doors open. A hurly-burly rush for the limited number of choice seats starts, and soon one is seated breathlessly and forcibly.

The theatre is very small and quaint inside. It reminds one of the old French theatre with the crude footlights and the low balcony. The curtain is a drab dusty one, in harmony with the dry, cracked appearance of the stage. The lone usher, a huge Cossack-like fellow who answers to the name of Grischa, hands out little programs to the accompaniment of an English that sounds like water bubbling out of a bottle. He is kind and very solicitous of the comfort of the audience, continually doing little favors for someone. Above is a crowded balcony with a noisy audience filling every available seat. The jocose mood still prevails, characterized by chatting argument and hearty laughter. Well-meaning Grischa can still be seen bobbing up and down.

Suddenly the lights dim, falter and fade. Everybody waits in the hushed darkness. Then the curtain rises on the eternal, iron-fast and superb truths of Moliere

C. H.

NEW EUROPE

Brownsville, the oldest Jewish pale of Brooklyn, is yielding its fame to newer communities. Nevertheless there are still some picturesque old synagogues in Brownsville. There are still small Chassidic synagogues. Newer fashions have not effaced the places of worship established years ago by sincere Jews who had come to America in order to live and worship in freedom.

In a narrow, obscure street of Brownsville there is one of these "schtieblich," the "Polische Schtiebel". This "schtiebel" is an ordinary red-brick house. Nothing but a small sign betrays its real identity.

It was the last day of Passover. The majority of the Chassidim were celebrating the departure of the holiday in true chassidic fashion. They had formed a circle, their hands interclasped, and were dancing and singing. The majority may have been Poles, but among them I saw all types of Jews dancing around the "bimah." I saw the genuine Chassid with his "payis", "kapota", and "gartel". I saw, also, the red-faced, heavily bearded Russian Jew with only a "gartel", the stout German Jew with the Van Dyke beard, the dark-eyed, black-bearded Palestinian Jew, and the American, or rather Americanized Jew. Though outwardly they were so different, inwardly they were all Chassidim.

In their dance and song I was aware that these Chassidim were much more energetic—not physically, but spiritually—than the Chassidim I had seen before. I listened more attentively to their song. They were singing the "Chassal sidur Pesach"—"The Commemoration of the Passover is now accomplished, according to its order... O, may we also merit the actual observance thereof.... O, hasten to lead the established plant to Zion with joyful song." Over and over again they sang it; on and on they danced...

Energy of the spirit cannot support frail bodies too long, however; and reluctantly the Chassidim stopped their dance. Fatigued in body they sat down to rest a while. Now

was an opportunity to view the "schtiebel." The place was small, dark, and ill-ventilated. It was a typical European "schtiebel". There were a few tables and benches in the room, a large reading desk in the center, a small one in front of the Ark, and book-closets all along the length of one wall of the room. The atmosphere was European; that is, it was not American.

Chassidim are essentially emotional, and soon they started singing again. This time their mood was philosophical, sentimental; not the joyous chassidic tone of the dance. Again they sang the "Chassal Sidur Pesach", but this time they sang it slowly. They did not look dreary; they still smiled, but now their song was really a prayer. "O hasten to lead the established plant to Zion with joyful song." "L'shanah habah b'yirushalyim"—"Next year we shall be in Jerusalem."

The group song soon ended. Single renditions followed. Chassid after Chassid stepped up to the small "bimah" and rendered his "prayer-song". Meditatively the Chassidim hummed along with the singer. I felt far, far away from America. I was in a "Polische schtiebel" in Poland...

Even Chassidim can not live in the "schtiebel" forever. They too have homes and families.

At last the service was over. I stepped out of the "schtiebel". The street was dark and deserted. The charm of the "schtiebel" was still upon me. I came to a busy avenue. Automobiles sped by, honking their horns. The spell was broken. I was in America...

J. K.

AGED OAK.

A broken thing lies dead upon the earth,
A thing that breathed of beauty at its birth;
For fashioned by the hands of the Divine
It towered proudly stretching towards its shrine.

Its trunk has seen the countless ages go
To dusty death in Mother Earth below.
It, too, has felt the trembling knife of youth
That struck the heart with Cupid's swift-gone truth.

But deep in dust it humbly lies forlorn,
Of life and beauty now forever shorn.
Oh, that it could its gathered wisdom speak
And tell the ancient tales I still would seek.

While I, wan lover of the forest shade,
Forget the glory of the world's parade;
A kindly friend of every fallen leaf—
I walk the silent woods in silent grief.

And still I turn old foot-worn paths to tread
Among the stately memories of the dead.

Louis Barishnikoff

Mongrel

By "H. A. S."

HE was just a stray mongrel before Jim took him in. Jim saw him kicked out of a saloon, tail twisted between his legs in cowardly fear. Jim pitied the poor wretch and brought him to his room, fed him and then tried to put him out. But a full stomach and a kindly hand had done wonders for the dog. His tail stood erect and his head was held high and he romped around the room like a colt at pasture, stretching its legs for the first time. After that Jim could not put him out; and he finally had to take him along up-State where in a wild mountain forest he owned a shack. Jim called him Mongie.

Jim had a young son, Robert. Jim was a widower and his son was the light of his father's eyes. Jim would often watch Robert and the dog playing together, and the emptiness of the shack would seem to fill out.

Once, while Jim was away, and Robert and Mongie were alone in the cabin, a starved wolf crept in through the open door. Mongie was snoozing in a corner and Robert was playing on the floor. The hungry wolf leaped at Robert and bit deep into the boy's arm. Robert cried out "Mongie" and fainted.

The dog bounded up and bowled the weakened wolf over. Frightened, the wolf slipped out through the door, and loped for the woods.

When Jim returned, he found Robert lying on the floor unconscious and Mongie licking the boy's punctured arm. Jim saw red. It looked certain that Mongie had bitten the boy; but, Jim reasoned, there was only Mongie who could call a doctor.

"If you're too late, you damned mongrel, I'll shoot you! Off with you, now, and get Doc."

Mongie understood. The way to the doctor was through the woods. Mongie was running a blue streak when he came upon the starved wolf. It's hard to say what came into the dog's mind. Perhaps a vision of Robert dying on the floor danced before his bloodshot eyes and dispelled all his master's care to hasten the errand.

It was a mongrel's vengeance that urged the animal, not the orders of his reasoning master. Mongie fixed his teeth in the wolf's throat, and together they rolled through the underbush. The wolf was able to take a slice out of Mongie's shoulder before Mongie reached his jugular. Then the tussle was all over, and Mongie limped off for the doctor.

The doctor might have come in time if Mongie had been a reasonable creature. As it was Doc hurried into the cabin just as the breath of life rattled out of Robert's throat.

Jim's lips were a thin line. He took his gun and shot a bullet through Mongie. A low whine and the dog lay still. Jim threw Mongie outside where the wolves would feast on him.

When Jim entered the cabin Doc began explaining the difference between a dog-bite and a wolf-bite. Doc didn't understand, at first, why Jim whitened and then clumped over to the water basin to wash his hands clean.

Jim felt, he afterwards said, like a "darned mongrel."

There have come suggestions that more vegetables be put in our vegetable soup. By way of furthering the cause we suggest they put more "horse" in the horseradish.

"Now stop that! If you eat another piece of cake you'll bust!

"Well, pass that cake and get out of the way."

Father and Son

By JACOB AGUSHEWITZ

REB ZEIDEL HALEVY was a man of medium stature and of strong build. His pale face was encircled by a black, thick beard. He was always dressed in a black silken gaberdine, long "tsitsos" dangling through his vest. The self-possessed look in his eyes, the simple manners, and the frank expression of his face, created an atmosphere of tranquility about him.

Indeed! Tranquility and simplicity were the chief traits of his character. Reb Zeidel never regarded himself as a "path-finder" in any sense of the term. He followed strictly in the long-trodden way of his ancestors. His lumber trade as well as his art of living were transmitted to him by his father.

Thus Reb Zeidel led a quiet, simple life, respected by the Russian community in which he lived, and undisturbed by new ideas that gradually filtered into the town and occupied the minds of the rising generation. He did not concern himself with attempts to solve the riddle of the Universe or his proper place in it. The purpose of the world and the purpose of his life were both clear to him. No doubts ever arose in his mind concerning any of his tenets. His topics of discussion invariably centered around the Talmud. His mind was content, his conscience clear, and he hoped that when his day would come his soul would return to heaven in as pure a state as when it was given to him.

Often he would sit at dusk and brood over the follies of the new generation that refused to follow in God's ways and talked of "cosmopolitanism," "self-emancipation," "reform" and "assimilation." His constant hopes and prayers were that the merciful God would pardon the transgressors, change their heart for the better and hasten the coming of the Messiah.

Mr. Jacob Levy is a middle-aged man. A short, neatly trimmed vandyke beard covers his chin. His dreamy eyes and broad forehead betoken an intelligent man. Indeed, Mr. Levy is a self-examining man. Like many of his generation, he has undergone constant intellectual struggles. Though reared in a strictly Jewish spirit, he was often disturbed by the new ideas from the "West." Little by little he discarded his old beliefs and looked for new interests.

"Cosmopolitanism" often absorbed all his energies. "Why not have peaceable human beings," quoth he, "instead of warring nations?" Why should the killing of people automatically become just, merely because it is being done on a large scale? For the realization of these ideals of Peace and Progress, the Jews and Gentiles ought to fight shoulder to shoulder against the common enemy, the Empire of Darkness. The Jews, he felt, were lagging behind in the performance of their duty towards this great ideal; "when the world will be full of knowledge like water covering the sea."

When he entered a Russian University, however, he realized how little co-operation he could expect from the Russians. He found, to his detriment, that racial hatred was too deep-rooted to be eliminated in one or two generations of "shoulder-to-shoulder" ideals.

Disillusioned, he turned to Zionism. In the building of his own fatherland he found absorption for his energy of the "ideal." Zealously he plunged into the work of furthering this cause.

But often, in the quiet of his study, he would sit down and ponder deeply. He would then evaluate his aspirations and their practicability. Looking out to the infinite Universe with its inexorable, severely mechanical rules, and considering how little these vast transcending forces seemed to care for the furtherance of his and his nation's cause, he would suddenly see his cherished ideals fade like a vain dream. The vision of his venerable father treading calmly in the way of his ancestors, quietly hoping, implicitly believing, always certain, never disillusioned, would then rise before him, in full contrast to his own distracted and standardless life. Then the tranquility radiating from his father's confident eyes would tap a fountain of faith within Jacob Levy which, rushing up, would flood out his pessimism, and enable him to find contentment in renewed zeal for the rebuilding of Zion.

Leaves and Lives

JEWS WITHOUT MONEY

By MICHAEL GOLD

Of all the authors who have written about and tried to catch the spirit of the Jewish East Side, it has remained for Michael Gold to give us what is perhaps the clearest and truest picture of that remnant of the old Ghetto. "Jews Without Money" is a sordid tale of the sufferings, hopes, fears, despairs, ambitions, prejudices, hates, and passions of the East Side medley of beggars, gangsters, millionaires, ordinary workingmen and small businessmen. Mr. Gold writes here of his own childhood experiences, with a genuine and sympathetic understanding of all the undercurrents which move the East Side.

The East Side is what it is because of the people who live there, and as a result the book must of necessity be a study of types of characters. The fiercely loving mother, with no room in her heart for hate, the blustering, arrogant father, and the parasitic greenhorns, pimps, and bums who infest the East Side are brought clearly and vividly before us again. All these types are merely to give us one larger picture—the Jewish Immigrant in America.

The East Side is for the first generation of immigrants—a vale of tears. It is the scene of his disillusionment; his dreams of a golden land disappear like so many pricked bubbles, and nothing is left for him but a hand-to-hand struggle with wretchedness, poverty, and starvation. Working from dawn to late at night he barely manages to eke out an existence. Finally he succumbs. Instead of a "New Promised Land" he finds "the sweatshops, the bawdy houses, and Tammany Hall." When he gets together with his fellow immigrants for some fun, the picture we get is of "Egypt's slaves around the campfire in the shadow of the pyramids." America was not the place for him. "America is so rich and fat because it has eaten the tragedy of millions of immigrants."

The second generation, however, having no disillusions to depress it, leads in its youth a happy, carefree existence. The boy sees only the romance of the East Side, despite his all too often being hungry. He leads a life of adventure, mysterious and thrilling, as he prowls the streets with his gang, stealing fruit, fighting enemy gangs, and exploring the secrets of sex through a keyhole. Only the schools cast a shadow over him. "School is a jail for children. One's sin is youth, and the jailers punish one for it."

Mr. Gold is highly figurative in his character studies, and were it not for the utter baseness and degradation of most of the studies, we would say poetic. Character is placed before us so boldly, and unmistakably: "She looked like some vulgar, pretentious prostitute, but was only the typical wife of a Jewish nouveau-riche."

The inherent optimism—or hardihood—of the Jew gives him strength to endure in the face of the hardships and atrocities that occur under his very eyes. "All these things happened. They were part of our daily lives, not lurid articles in a Sunday newspaper."

The book is quite definitely tinged with Communism. Mr. Gold is a Communist, editor of the New Masses, and it was to be expected that he would attempt to preach his doctrines. "O workers' Revolution, you brought hope to me, a lonely suicidal boy. You are the true Messiah." He denounces the modern state as the breeder and trainer of gangsters and murderers. "It is America that has taught the sons of tubercular tailors how to kill."

Mr. Gold has here, with a generous admixture of Yiddish idiom, given us a simple, intimate novel of that motley, colorful, hyperemotional conglomeration that is called the East Side. He speaks as man to man, not as author to reader. "Jews Without Money" may very likely endure to become the epic of the East Side.

B. G.

BOTTOM DOGS

By EDWARD DAHLBERG

In his hapless, hunger-beset struggle the squalid and the sickly degradation of morality crawl out of the bottom-dog like the evils out of Pandora's chest. And, as in Pandora's chest, there is one redeemer, one cure—the hope of betterment. That hope is not expressed in the novel itself—for it is a hopeless tale of a degenerating spirit—but in an excellent introduction by D. H. Lawrence. His stand is of the socialization of suffering. Now himself shriveled by death, his introduction is of vigorous compassion for the souls shriveled by death in life and for the misguided bodies that instinctively stumble through complacent wretchedness.

"Bottom Dogs" dwells depressingly on the festering of moral decay. In the novel human beastliness and carnality have not even the vigor of animality. There exists only an insensate perversion of impotent characters.

The hero, Lorry, has spent a guileless childhood as a street gamin and as an inmate of a torturous orphan asylum. First he is subjected to the loose ways of street-prowling, and then to the stifling effect of a rigid discipline in the asylum. This distorted childhood could bring no essence of manliness; only a listless pessimism, defeatist's ambitions, and squelched vitality.

Lorry, the victim of meted incompetence, hoboes it to the coast. The wanderlust in him seems to be a spirit drawing him away from his constant frustrations. This sensibility is the voice of a rebelling conscience and the last stronghold of virtue. This last redeemer, too, is killed and there begins in Los Angeles the period of fertile immorality The book abruptly ends with this initiation.

For its style and substance "Bottom-Dogs" has an enervating shabbiness. The novel is typical of that ever-expressivenes, or stylelessness, of the scourged and of the blasphemous accuracy of the depraved and the pessimist. In one place Mr. Dahlberg distorts the expression "History was repeating its faults again" into "History was vomiting over itself." This is typical of the sulleness of his style—or lack of style which is very often just another form of expressiveness.

Throughout there are vivid pictures of the colorlessness and morbidness of the bottom-dog, a morbidness that is a callous against all external abuse and yet contains the virus of an inward rotting. The pictures are done vividly—just as a grunt is a vivid expression of distaste.

Its boast "a genuine picture of the bottom-dog" may be true, but its realism, we often feel, is carried far into coarseness. It has the same awkward realism of the energetic Frenchman who rubbed sand over his painting of a beach. Mr. Dahlberg rubs too much mud over his picture—and the effect leaves us in a sense befouled.

"Bottom-Dogs" and its human realism is another of those reeking ogres among well-groomed literature. The unkempt sufferers have a real cause—but they cannot successfully plead it by denying the existence of the qualities that alone will bring their pitiable state to an end.

H. G.

THE WOMAN OF ANDROS

By THORNTON WILDER

R. M. W.

The trials and tribulations of to-day are the same as those of two-thousand years ago. Youth—today—doubts the purpose of life, but no differently from the youth of two thousand years ago. The tragedy of life is universal—and the same in all ages. So, preaches Thornton Wilder, whether we live, doubt, dspair and suffer in this twentieth century or twenty centuries ago, the story of our eventful, tearstained existence on this earth is of no more importance than to warrant being commented upon as casually as the description of a sunset. What has happened—of so much consequence to certain individuals—will repeat itself as long as Man breathes.

And so the author describes a sunset over Spain, over Africa, over Palestine and over Greece. Incidentally, then, is unfolded the

tragedy which overshadowed the lives of a group of Grecians on the Island of Brynos, in the Aegean sea; and after the curtain has dropped the author again takes up the description of a sunset which is the same in another country.

The story is the drama of the lives of the people of Brynos, and of the arrival of Crysis, the Woman of the Island of Andros, and of her young sister in their midst. Crysis is an heitaera, a member of the "world's oldest profession," but a dignified and philosophical woman who arranges weekly banquets for certain privileged young men of the village at which philosophy is discussed.

There is nothing new in the philosophy that is presented. It is pagan, with a pessimism peculiar to the Greek as he thought of the passing of youth, and of its helplessness in the hands of Fate. The real value of the book lies in its subtle style. The only definite allusion to the real period of the story is: "The sun was setting over the land that was soon to become holy."

The conversation of these ancients might well have been that of our contemporaries. As for their dress the only reminder that these people were living twenty centuries ago is an occasional phrase "as he sat down he smoothed the folds of his robe," reminding us that the toga was the vogue of the time. Thus, the back-ground peculiar to that ancient age seems to merit only casual mention, emphasizing the universality and repetition of the drama of life.

Though Crysis, the Andrian, is an heitara there are very few references to sex. The reference to Crysis' profession is not only not repellent but it affords a deep insight into the philosophy of lonesomeness. Crysis—because she realizes the lonesomeness of life, gathers about her a motley array of salvaged human derelicts, who, because they are dependent on her, will remain with her, unlike friends who are so fickle and transient. Crysis, says the author, because of her profession, realizes all the more this lonesomeness and its consequent craving for human companionship. Crysis tries to guard her young sister from falling into her footsteps, but fate tricks both.

Pamphilus, the son of the "first" family of Brynos, has for years been expected to marry Philumena, the daughter of the "second" family of the island, but has continually put off the marriage. Crysis secretly loves Pamphilus, but he loves her sister, Glycerium. Crysis dies, still alone; Glycerium, her sister, bears a child from Pamphilus, out of wedlock, and soon dies, too. Pamphilus is left alone, still hesitating to marry Philumena, the choice of his and her parents.

ADAM

By Ludwig Lewisohn

The latest product of Ludwig Lewisohn's pen, "Adam," contains almost all of the doctrines for which he has stood in the last few years. "Adam" is a realistic play consisting of a prologue, a body of nine acts, and an epilogue. The prologue deals with past and the body of the play with present Jewish problems; and the epilogue prophesies a scene in Palestine.

The prologue presents a discussion between Rabbi Tarfon, Rabbi Yishmoel, and Rabbi Akiba, and demonstrates the necessity of the Talmud in preserving Jewish unity during the exile.

The play is the story of Adam Elhar, the only son of a Polish Rabbi. Adam has fled from home and has worked himself up to the top of one of the famous firms in England. He has done everything to become assimilated into the Gentile world only to meet miserable failure in the end. Honest and simple Englishmen and Americans, who respect him for his human qualities, refuse to accept him into their society. Even his young American wife who has tried hard to love him, feels the abyss that divides her from the Jew, Adam. The end of this marriage is separation; and Adam, who could not find happi-

ness on earth, commits suicide.

The epilogue consists of a scene in Palestine where an American Chalutz and a Hungarian Chalutza, finding perfect harmony between themselves, decide to marry. They desire to have a child, so that the interest of the land of the fathers may be advanced.

Mr. Lewisohn has expressed nothing new in this, his first play. The drama contains the ideas he has been preaching since the writing of "Up-Stream"—the racial unity of Israel, the failure of assimilation; the dual conscience of the Anglo-Saxons and the thoroughly Jewish doctrine that the basic instinct for marriage is not sexual desire but reproduction and the preservation of the race. He has, however, given another evidence of how deeply these ideas have penetrated his soul and how they have inspired him to start on new forms. This form of dialogue has the added value of realistically portraying the actual attitude of the Gentiles when they are faced with the problem of assimilating the Jews; and convinces one more than any of the passionate pleas that Mr. Lewisohn has ever written in the interest of the Jews.

We have lately read views questioning the reason for Mr. Lewisohn's return to Judaism. A certain popular critic has claimed that Ludwig Lewisohn was persecuted during the War not because he was a Jew but because he was a German. But, says the critic, Mr. Lewisohn was too proud of his German extraction to admit this fact, and he therefore alleged he was persecuted because of his Jewish faith. No one who has read "Mid-Channel will take this critic's view seriously.

There is, moreover, another side of Mr. Lewisohn's turning his back upon the Anglo-Saxons and that is that he feels himself perfectly at home in Jewry. Since his return to Judaism, Lewisohn has devoted himself passionately to the study of Jewish culture. He is enthusiastic about the Jewish past and future.

We have always been unable to agree with Mr. Lewisohn's statement that the Anglo-Saxons as a race are possessed of a dual conscience. Were not the Puritans, were not all genuine English religionists and, for that matter, some of the outstanding English atheists, consistent in belief and action? Lack of unity between theory and action is a quality that belongs to any man, irrespective of race, who is without religion, without firm conviction. Real Jews, it is very true, are harmonious in thought and action; but this is also true of Anglo-Saxons or even of Buddhists. Mr. Lewisohn himself urges passionately, in almost all of his works, that the Anglo-Saxons should adopt unity of theory and action, thus admitting that the fault is not inherent in the race but lies in their environmental conditions.

Ludwig Lewisohn's contribution as the introducer of the modern Jew and his problems into the English literature is undeniable. He delves deeply and truthfully into the Jew's soul and breaks off the tradition of caricaturing the Jew. Though Lewisohn may be mistaken in some of his theories and though he lacks a high moral dignity, yet he is sincere, and thoroughly human.

H. M.

SUMMER TIME

Scrawled demands
On shifting sands,
Ardent expression of fleeting affection
Glibly proclaiming a vague predilection,
Promising
Most anything.

EFGEE

The Jew in the German Literature of the 15th, 16th and 17th Centuries

By BERNARD GREENBERG

A gloomy picture unfolds itself to our view when we consider the German literature of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in its relation to the Jew. Hate and prejudice for the Jew are the fundamental features of the literature during these centuries. The poets, to be tolerated, wrote from the peoples' viewpoint, and the people were filled with the most venomous hatred for the Jew. Superstition and fanaticism, fanned by the goading and persuasions of the travelling friars and flagellants united to portray the Jew as the enemy of Christianity.

The first part of the literature to be considered is the Passion Plays. It was the purpose of those plays to show the Jews the weakness of their religion and to strengthen the Christians in theirs. As a result, all mention of the Jew in these plays, as well as in the moralities, brings forth a debate over the relative values of Judaism and Christianity. Considering the purpose of these plays, the outcome of the debates is obvious.

The debates in the Passion Plays occupy a position of secondary importance, being inserted only where they have a bearing on the main theme, and take the form of direct cross-examinations of each side by the other. The participants of the debate are the leaders of the Church and the leaders of the Synagogue. When the synagogue puts the questions, they are made simple and easy to answer, but when the church puts the questions, they are complicated and very difficult to answer. The answers of the Christians are generally polite and polished while the answers of the Jews are almost always vulgar and boorish. The debates almost always end with the victory of the Christians, and some of the Jews accept baptism, while those who don't, go off amid the abuse and jeers of the mob. It is interesting to note that only rarely does Jesus appear in personal debate with the Jews, and when he does it is only to say a few short words, at the conclusion of which the Jews stone him. He, however, is not affected by this, and goes unharmed.

We next encounter the debates in the moralities, where we find them promoted to a position of primary importance. The debate here finds its inception between two ordinary laymen but ultimately they invoke the aid of their respective religious orders. Typical of this sort of play is the morality play of "Kaiser Constantin," by Hanz Folz. Constantin had gone over from Judaism to Christianity, and his mother was trying with the aid of the Rabbi to bring him back to the teachings of his forefathers. Constantin demands that a Jew and Christian dispute the question before him. A long dispute ensues. Here also the questions are so adroitly framed that the Christians can answer without difficulty, while the Jews can't. At the end of the argument, the Rabbi, who had set out to convert the Christians to Judaism, is himself convinced of the truths of Christianity, and accepts baptism, as do also Constantin's mother and other Jews who were present during the argument. Immediately afterward, the mother and the Rabbi are seen eating swine's flesh, thus giving the poet a chance to express his scorn and contempt for them, saying that they accepted Christianity not because they believed in it, but because of their desire for swine's flesh.

Another interesting incident occurs in this play, revolving about the religious belief that the name of God cannot be mentioned without bringing about immediate and powerful results. The Jew deduces from this belief that Jesus cannot be the true God because his name may be pronounced without any consequences whereas if the Jew pronounces the name of his God, the one to whom it is spoken must die. An ox is brought up for demonstration. The Jew whispers something in the ear of the ox, whereupon the ox falls dead. The Christian asserts, however, that the Jew spoke the name of the Devil. Then he declares that he can bring the ox back to life again. He whispers the name of Christ in the ear of the ox, and lo! the ox is revived. All the Jews are convinced by this miracle. This incident may well serve as an example of the manner and means by which the religious strife was carried on.

Thus, we find throughout the Passion and Morality Plays the emphasis upon the strength of Christianity as opposed to the weakness of Judaism, and as a consequence of the almost continual victory of the Christians over the Jews we find the latter accepting baptism at the close of the play. The Jewish religion is portrayed as ridiculous and false, and only rarely is the fault of the Jews themselves mentioned.

If the poets hoped, however, that by means of these plays they might really convert the Jews, they were greatly mistaken, for only very rarely did the Jews take part in the presentation, or offer the ideas contained in it. The Jews thus remained unaffected by the Christian influences of the plays. The Christians realized this, however, for they resorted to force to bring the Jews into conflict with them, and a great amount of prose disputations have come down to us in which the Jews defended themselves against Gentile attacks. Perhaps the most famous is the Reuchlin-Pfefferkorn dispute. Johann Pfefferkorn, a Jewish apostate, published his "Judenspiegel" in 1507, in which he demanded the confiscation of all Hebrew books on the grounds that they were detrimental to Christian interests, and succeeded in 1509 in extorting from the German Emperor Maximilian an edict for the destruction of all Hebrew books in the possession of the Jews in Cologne and Frankfort. "The Jews appealed and John Reuchlin, a noted Hebrew scholar, was asked in 1510 to give his opinion on the case. Reuchlin's report was favorable to the Jews." Of the whole mass of Hebrew literature only writings like "Toledoth Yeshu," which contained blasphemies against Jesus, he considered ought to be destroyed. The Bible, Talmud, Zohar and the various commentaries were exonerated. Largely as a result of this report the edict was revoked.

These debates ended with Luther who found occasion in his "Das Jesus ein geborener Jude sei," to harshly criticise the Church for its tactics in endeavoring to convert the Jews. He said that had he been a Jew, the example of cruelty set by the Church would have tempted him to become a pig rather than a Christian. This, of course, being the statement of a man who was himself persecuted by the Catholic Church, loses a great deal of its sincerity and truth—but the stimulus for such strong derogation must have existed in some form. With the advent of Luther, Germany was split into two religious factions which, for a short time, were so busy fighting each other that they had no time to devote themselves specifically to troubling the Jews. The presentation of the plays grew less and less frequent, for the vain endeavors of the poets discouraged them.

The Jews would have been content, however, had the anti-Semitism confined itself to literature. Unfortunately the desire to put the Jew in a contemptible position spread into actual practice. During the Middle Ages the Jews were forced to wear special clothing, and the poets immediately proceeded to mock this garment, even though it was forced upon the Jew. Since the time of Pope Innocent III the Jews in France, Germany, and Holland had to wear a golden ring on their breast as a sign of identification. Thus, the poets had a definite pattern to follow when describing a Jew. He wore a long coat and a skull-cap and had a bristly beard that shook with every motion of his chin. This individual form of dress was so prevalent that it was sufficient description of a person to merely say that he was Jewishly clad. The poet Johann Fischart makes specific reference to the golden ring, and Sebastian Brant and Geiler von Kaiserberg, among others, make more generalized fun of the "Jewish clothing."

Now leaving the Jew for a while, the poets went further to ridicule the Israelites' ceremonies and prayers. These rituals were so revised as to make them senseless or vulgar, or both. Among the prayers that were thus parodied are "Adoun Olam" in "Von der Alten und Neuen Ee," by Hans Folz, and "Avinu Malkenu" in the "Himmelfahrtsspiel" of the Sterzinger Assemblage. It should be noted that in all of these parodies the Jew speaks a correct German, showing that there was not yet a peculiarly Yiddish dialect.

In Hebrew literature the Talmud came in for by far the harshest criticism, perhaps be-

cause it was least understood. One of the bitterest critics of the Talmud, though, Hans Folz, shows in his poetry what for a non-Jew was an astounding knowledge of the Talmud; but this did not keep him from slandering it. Reuchlin, in his defense of the Talmud, said that it was not made so that any ignoramus who did not understand the Talmud might criticise it and demand its confiscation.

In all this storm of contempt for Hebrew literature the poets did not lose sight of the Jew as a character with possibilities of stimulating their hate upon him. Toward this end they sought to entertain the public by portraying him in ludicrous situations or by distorting his life. The poets in this field were many. In various poems we find Jews portrayed as suckling from a pig, but the main efforts of the poets were directed toward picturing the Jewish Messiah as being born a girl.

A young Jewess is led into illicit relations with an adventurer or a student in the belief that the latter is Elijah, and that she is to be the mother of the Messiah. Invariably the offspring is a girl, and the Jewess accepts baptism. Innumerable poets handled this theme, including Folz, Abraham a S. Clara, Grimmelshausen and Kirchoff. The height of such vulgar means to gain the end of the poets is found in the poem "Von einer schwangeren Judin" by Johann Fischart. In the beginning the poem prophesies that on a certain date a Jewess in Binzwangen will give birth to two pigs; and, sure enough, on that exact date a Jewess in that town gives birth to two sows which die immediately after birth. It can be seen from this how low the poets stooped in their art to villify the Jews.

In general if we examine the literature of this time we see that there is often an endeavor to attack the inner life, customs and thoughts of the Jews. Some poets like Folz and Grimmelshausen show a remarkable knowledge of Hebrew literature. The poets seize upon anything that plays any part in the life of the Jew as material for mockery. The Jews are mocked alike for their religiousness and for accepting baptism; and although some poets like Brant and Pauli give the Jews lukewarm praise for the strict observance of the Jewish holidays they are only "voices crying in a wilderness."

In the shifting of the attack from the Jewish religion to the Jew himself the latter assumes the form of a sorcerer and to a very much greater extent that of a usurer — so much so in fact that the terms "usurer" and "Jew" came to be synonymous. His form and character are familiar—miserly, brutal, selfish, demanding and sometimes getting his pound of flesh. Usually the forces of justice and humanity triumph and the usurer receives his just deserts. Some poets like Ayrer, in his "Halbnarrischen Wucherer" and Gryphias, in his "Horribiliscribrifax", endeavor to vindicate the Jewish usurer because the latter was forced into this lowly profession against his will; and once, even, in Ayrer's morality play "Vom falschen Notarius mit seinem unwahrhaften Beicht", the usurer becomes a benefactor—but only rarely does the usurer receive the grace of his clientele.

Besides the works of known authorship there existed in Germany at this period a myriad of folk-tales and folk-songs that are marked by fierce anti-Semitism. It is in this lore that we find the dread "blood libel", the accusation that the Jews used Christian children's blood in the Passover ceremonies; and also the accusation that the Jews are the defilers of the Christian sacraments. The Christians out of their hatred of the Jews sought justification for persecuting the latter physically as well as spiritually and found in these songs and tales of child murder, or "water and food poisonings" and other trumped up malefactions all the justification they needed for breaking out in riots to massacre the Jews. Only rarely do the more famous poets deal with these accusations. But whatever the source the result was real and destructive.

The time was not distant, however, when the position of the German Jew would experience a material betterment. In the middle of the 18th century, when the Haskalah movement unearthed the culture of the world to the Jew, Lessing wrote his one-act play "Die Juden" and five years later became acquainted with the man who was to become his best friend and the model for Nathan in "Nathan der Weise"—Moses Mendelsohn. Politically also the Jews achieved greater prominence and gradually the world realized the great injustice that had been done to the Jews. And with understanding came tolerance and respect.

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